

24 MAR 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

Sir:

1. At the Monday morning meeting of the Presidential Commission all Commissioners were present with the exception of Governor Reagan. Mr. Kane and myself spent about one hour with the gentlemen, the Vice President being present for about forty minutes. The results of the session are as follows:

a. The Commissioners have withdrawn the request to review their own "security investigative files."

b. We have agreed, in those cases where investigative files exist, to present each Commissioner with a table of contents.

c. We have agreed to sanitize a few investigative files and allow the Commissioners to review them.

2. I also recommend to you that we go one additional step. I suggest, after the tables of contents are drawn up, Mr. Kane, with a Commission Staff Member at his side, remove from each file that material we feel under obligation to protect. When that is accomplished, we then allow each Commissioner to review the contents of what remains.

3. It was a rather serious session, in which we were hard pressed to maintain our position. Upon a quick analysis I would identify two problems that are present:

a. Mr. Belin announced at the session's opening that the Commission would receive, within two or three weeks, a one-day briefing on the Agency's file structure. I believe it to have been unfortunate that this particular issue on the "security files" came up for discussion before the Commission had received the overall file briefing.

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b. There was a partial prevailing thought, strongly and frequently articulated by Dean Griswold, that there was a lack of understanding as to why the Commission members could not receive that type of file material which was presented to Mrs. Abzug. Griswold pursued with some emotion the matter of the mail surveillance to the Soviet Union, his position that it was illegal, and his desire to know if we intercepted and filed any of his correspondence to the Soviet Union. I explained to him several times that such a matter would not be contained in his security file. He again returned to the example of Mrs. Abzug and I additionally informed him that the file on Mrs. Abzug presented by Mr. Colby consisted of information in the Agency located in places other than the Office of Security. This whole matter was left that Mr. Belin would have further discussions with Mr. Knoche now that there appears to exist--and I wished it had previously--a definition of that which the Commissioners seek.

4. It might also be interesting to record that Messrs. Dillon and Connor appeared to be most understanding of the issue. Messrs. Griswold and Kirkland pursued their points with considerable vigor and the other Commission members were in between. The Vice President several times framed hypothetical questions in what appeared to me to be a technique to elicit answers that would counterbalance the direction in which Dean Griswold was endeavoring to push me.

/s/ John F. Blake

John F. Blake
Deputy Director
for
Administration

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DD/A:John F. Blake:der (24 March 1975)